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"Politics at the United Nations Organization: Relevance and Reform"

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SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

“POLITICS AT THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION:
RELEVANCE AND REFORM”

DIP 6202

Autumn 2018
Hugh T. Dugan

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course's goal is to provide to the student capacity and fluency in gauging indicators of the UN Organization's potential capacity to realize the principles and objectives of the UN Charter within today's increasingly transnational landscape. This approach will suggest measures to increase the Organization's effectiveness and efficiency which the student would take forward from the classroom.

PEDAGOGICAL PURPOSES

The course will promote students' understanding of global issues from a range of perspectives to develop viewpoints on how international cooperation might better address those issues. The course will encourage important citizenship skills such as participation, cooperation and collaboration, negotiation, diplomacy, conflict resolution, and stewardship of international machinery.

This course seeks to assist the student in developing the following:

- An understanding and appreciation of the opportunities and constraints posed by inter-governmental conference diplomacy in an era of continued globalization and related developments and trends in global governance.
- A capacity to engage with United Nations stakeholders to contribute to the implementation of the UN Charter's purposes.
- Effective and efficient composition of thought in writing and speaking on these matters.
- A grasp of networking within UN-relevant spheres beyond the classroom.

OVERVIEW

Well-intentioned, principles-based institutionalized activities for international cooperation, those of the United Nations Organization, must be stewarded constantly to remain relevant to contemporary developments and therefore vibrant and poised to address critical matters breaking on the horizon.

To this end, this course will describe the evolution of the international public sector, specifically the United Nations Organization, and develop an analytical framework for understanding whether and how to improve the United Nations Organization's performance within contemporary international affairs.

It is designed (1) to develop in the student the capacity and facility to evaluate the relevance of the United Nations Organization to international trends and developments, and (2) to assess whether the United Nations Organization contributes effectively and efficiently to the realization of the United Nations Charter's three main pillars: peace and security, economic and social development (poverty alleviation), and the human rights.

This entails understanding contemporary globalization dynamics and assessing the relevance of the international public sector designed to address them. The course will review international matters since World War II as the threshold event leading to the creation of the United Nations Charter and its international machinery, the United Nations System including its flagship United Nations Organization. The course will study this machinery's purposes, protocols, and processes for assessing its outputs and outcomes. Various United Nations entities will be surveyed to identify their purposes, governance structures, programs of work, leadership opportunities, resources' effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability mechanisms. The class will analyze operations and processes for enabling efficiency and effectiveness in several United Nations Organization entities.

OBJECTIVES

To develop an analytical framework and the professional fluency to discuss with academics and practitioners the state of the world in terms relating to more effective and efficient international public-sector management of evolving topics and trends relevant to the principles of the United Nations Charter, specifically to

- Understand the core mission of the United Nations Charter and its elaboration of international machinery to that end.
- Examine the United Nations System, Organization, and actors: a clear mapping of the United Nations system since its creation as well as its different working bodies and agencies. This includes its historical foundations, current structures, operations and functionalities, the nature of representation in the United Nations Organization, and its capacity for addressing contemporary issues.
- Develop critical analytical skills regarding the elaboration and stewardship of this international machinery as a function of the key issues of peace and security, development in the economic and social spheres (including humanitarian matters), and human rights.

- Re-imagine international machinery for international cooperation (specifically, the United Nations Organization) by surveying challenges encountered by it and considering enhanced approaches for international cooperation into the future given trends in globalization and global governance matters.

To describe and explain causes and nature of major questions in the international system (e.g., economic development, conflict, the environment, human rights).

To encourage students to develop critical analysis on the future of global governance given high uncertainties on the international scene.

To debate future perspectives for international cooperation.

To examine related questions from the perspectives of other nations.

To develop an understanding of the United Nations' historical and current role in the international political system.

To explore the challenges faced by the United Nations, both political and structural.

To examine the United Nations Organization structure in detail, and to understand the roles of the various United Nations entities.

To study the policies of other nations and groups of nations at the United Nations Organization to better understand the process of deliberations and agreements by United Nations membership and their translation into programs and activities by the United Nations entities' secretariats.

COURSE MODALITIES

The class meeting will begin with a discussion of current events relevant to the United Nations Organization, and then proceed to a lecture /discussion of that week's topic. The first few meetings will consist largely of lectures and class discussion. At this stage (by late September), the goal will be to ensure that all students have a basic grasp of the subject matter, after which the class will shift to a more seminar-like format emphasizing student participation and presentations of memos on select topics (to be formulated and assigned). *Class time will fly by or it will drag by, depending upon students' level of preparation and participation.*

In addition to the assigned readings, the class will discuss topics from current events vis-à-vis the United Nations Organization. Every student is expected to contribute to this discussion by researching and presenting two such topics to the class (20 minutes each) in a memo format. Topics should be defined ahead of time in consultation with the professor. Examples include reforms related to:

- UN Organization institutional design and configuration,
- UN Organization administrative matters (e.g., Secretariat human resources management, internal oversight measures),
- UN Organization membership arrangements (e.g., reform of the Security Council membership, revitalization of the General Assembly, selection process of the next Secretary-General),
- UN Organization funding (e.g., Member States' dues and assessments scales),
- Wider participation of non-governmental organizations and other non-state actors in Organization considerations (e.g., the development of the UN Global Compact for businesses, accreditation of NGOs through the Economic and Social Council).

These memos would be polished and compiled and submitted for consideration by the editors of the School's Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations.

The final examination will be in essay format. The student will choose one of two questions during the first half of the exam time. The same format will apply during the second half of the exam time with two different questions from those posed earlier.

Out of courtesy to others and to avoid disruption, all personal electronic devices must be silenced during class time. Personal emails and texts may be reviewed during the mid-class break (10 minutes), not during class, to maintain effective classroom participation. Discussion in class will be on "Chatham House Rule" to facilitate both free exchange of views and confidentiality of classroom discussion as a learning environment. Therefore, students may not record or broadcast any part of the class time. If students must e-mail the professor, please note that most responses would be delivered in the subsequent class meeting for the benefit of all students: (Hugh.Dugan@SHU.edu).

PERFORMANCE METRICS

As this class only meets once a week, attendance is of paramount importance and absolutely required. Students should contact the professor about each absence to class. Un-excused absences will result in a reduced grade according to the circumstances.

Students will be tasked to read course materials, write two memos (single-spaced, three pages) and present them in class, sit for the final written exam (essay); and participate in class (which could include contributing to a blog or something similar). Participation is active involvement in discussion which includes careful listening, consideration, and respect for the opinions of members. *Students will be evaluated and graded on these opportunities for demonstrating their facility with the subject matters.*

This class is heavily participatory. Participation shall reflect your careful reading and consideration of each week's material. There will be lectures by the instructor and speakers, but much learning occurs through active engagement rather than through passive listening. For this reason, your presence and active participation will be expected at all sessions.

Writing clearly and succinctly is an important skill for those who progress in careers in international public service. Therefore, it will be a key component of the course work for this class. In addition to writing the final examination (which will be in essay format), each student will write and present two concise memos on topics to be decided.

Grading will be based on

- Class attendance: 10%
- Participation: 20%
- Memo and presentation: 25%
- Final Exam: 45%

READING MATERIALS

To the extent possible, there will be no required purchases, rather materials will be available online or at the Walsh Library

FIRST WEEK MATERIALS FOR DISCUSSION ON SEPTEMBER 10:

Become familiar with the UN by reading

<http://www.un.org/en/about-un/index.html>

Basic Facts about the United Nations, United Nations, 2014.

ISBN: 978-92-1-101279-8

<http://issuu.com/unpublications/docs/basicfacts>

United Nations Handbook 2014-15 ("The New Zealand Handbook"), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand

www.mfat.govt.nz/UNHB2014/index.php

Everything You've Always Wanted to Know about the United Nations

<https://issuu.com/unpublications/docs/9789210543835>

The United Nations at a Glance

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2012/pi2046.doc.htm>

History of the United Nations Charter

<http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/introductory-note/index.html>

In San Francisco, Ban celebrates 70th anniversary of UN Charter – 'compass' to a better world (news article)

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51271#.WaQPBLpFyuU>

The United Nations Charter

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml/>

Ensuring a Well-Managed United Nations

The Stanley Foundation, Conference Report, February 2006

<http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/resources.cfm?ID=44>

United Nations Secretary-General's statement on priorities:

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2012/01/general-assembly-briefing-by-the-secretary-general-on-his-vision-and-priorities-for-his-second-term-in-office-english.html>

Video - Speech at International Peace Institute (September 2014) **The Theory and Practice of International Order**, Dr. Vike-Freiberga, formerly the president of Latvia and now the president of the Club of Madrid.

<http://www.ipinst.org/2014/09/vike-freiberga-rethinking-the-united-nations>

ADDITIONAL READING MATERIALS

Students are expected to stay abreast of current events, particularly international events (e.g., UN News website (read daily)).

Here is a sampling of other materials that will be referenced and suggested for reading. Reading assignments will be developed as the course proceeds based on the first several meetings. Readings, or links to them, will be either posted to a website if possible. An extensive bibliography on UN reform and relevance will be distributed.

The UN's homepage (bookmark this for ready reference):

<http://www.un.org/en/index.html>

Glenn, Jerome C., **The 2015-2016 State of the Future**

<https://themp.org/>

Review the website, purchase is optional.

Recent speeches by the United Nations Secretary-General

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/secretary-generals-speeches>

Report on the work of the Organization 2014, United Nations

http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/1

Provisional agenda of the seventy-second regular session of the General Assembly, UN document A/72/150 of 13 July 2017

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/183/61/pdf/N1718361.pdf?OpenElement>

United Nations Association of the USA, **A Global Agenda**
<http://www.unausa.org/news-publications/publications/a-global-agenda>

Smith, Courtney B., **Politics and Processes at the United Nations, The Global Dance**
ISBN-13: 978-1588263483; ISBN-10: 1588263487.

Claude, Inis L., Jr., **Swords into Plowshares**, 4th ed., chapters 1-4, 7-9, 11-12, 14, 18-19.

Russett, Bruce and Sutterlin, James S., "The UN in a New World Order," **Foreign Affairs** 70 (Spring 1991).

Roberts, Adam and Kingsbury, Benedict, eds., **United Nations, Divided World** (Oxford University Press), chapters 1-3, 12-13.

United States Commission on Improving the Effectiveness of the United Nations, **Defining Purpose: The U.N. and the Health of Nations** (Washington, DC: 1993).

Urquhart, Brian, **Towards a More Effective United Nations: Two Studies** (Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, 1992).

Moore, John Allphin and Pubantz, Jerry, **The New United Nations: International Organization in the Twenty-First Century**, (Prentice Hall 2006).

The United Nations and the Twenty-First Century: The Imperative for Change, The Stanley Foundation, 31st United Nations of the Next Decade Conference Report, June 1996
<http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/resources.cfm?ID=142>

Luck, Edward, "The Secretary-General in a Unipolar World" (in **The United Nations Secretary-General in World Politics**, edited by Simon Chesterman)
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291938933_The_secretary-general_in_a_unipolar_world

Caron, David, "The Legitimacy of the Collective Authority of the United Nations," **American Journal of International Law** 87, no. 3., pp.552-588.

United Nations Association of the USA, **Partners for Peace: Strengthening Collective Security for the 21st Century**, A Report of the Global Policy Project (1992).

Reforming the Security Council, Special Report (International Peace Academy and the Stanley Foundation, April 1994).

WEEKLY PROGRAM (Class sessions are on Mondays)

August 27: Introduction to the course.

September 3: Holiday, no class

September 10: An overall framework for examining the politics at the United Nations Organization about its relevance and reform.

September 17: Leadership in the UN since the Cold War: Key member states, significant blocs, and Secretariat (including selection process of the Secretary-General).

September 24: The structure, purposes, and financing of the UN system: different frameworks for understanding the way the UN functions.

October 1: UN Reform eras, with a focus on the views of the Organization's major founder, host country, and largest financial supporter, the United States.

October 8: Holiday, no class

October 15: Types of Reform: Administrative, Institutional, Membership, and Financial, among others.

October 22: Security Council practices: evolving institutional factors.

October 29: UN Membership reform matters: elections to UN bodies, Security Council membership expansion proposals, and revitalizing the Organization's parliamentary process.

November 5: Major Global Conferences and Goal Setting.

November 12: Non-state actors and the case for a new multilateralism: Growth of civil society and NGO participation, terrorism and other disruptions, observers in the General Assembly (e.g., the International Olympic Committee), and the private sector (e.g., the UN Global Compact) (Student presentations).

November 19: Globalization and the UN's role with respect to critical emerging issues; Evolving institutional factors (Student presentations).

November 26: (Student presentations).

December 3: Global governance – how would the UN Organization fit in?

December 10: Views on the future of the UN Organization.

December 17: Written Exam.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration and may result in a lowered or failing grade for the course and up to possible dismissal from the School of Diplomacy. See University and School standards for academic conduct here:

<<https://www.shu.edu/student-life/upload/Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>>

<<http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm>>

ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the policy and practice of Seton Hall University to promote inclusive learning environments. If you have a documented disability you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in compliance with University policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and/or the New Jersey Law against Discrimination. Please note, students are not permitted to negotiate accommodations directly with professors. To request accommodations or assistance, please self-identify with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67 at the beginning of the semester. For more information or to register for services, contact DSS at (973) 313-6003 or by e-mail at DSS@shu.edu.

POLICY ON INCOMPLETES

Incompletes will be given only in exceptional cases for emergencies. Students wishing to request a grade of Incomplete must provide documentation to support the request accompanied by a Course Adjustment Form (available from the Diplomacy Main Office) to the professor *before* the date of the final examination. If the incomplete request is approved, the professor reserves the right to specify the new submission date for all missing coursework. Students who fail to submit the missing course work within this time period will receive a failing grade for all missing coursework and a final grade based on all coursework assigned. Any Incomplete not resolved within one calendar year of receiving the Incomplete or by the time of graduation (whichever comes first) automatically becomes an "FI" (which is equivalent to an F). It is the responsibility of the student to make sure they have completed all course requirements within the timeframe allotted. Please be aware that Incompletes on your transcript will impact financial aid and academic standing.

STYLE

Papers should utilize one of the *Chicago Manual of Style* citation formats: Author-Date or Notes and Bibliography. The guidelines for these formats are on the course Blackboard page.

Why an education in diplomacy and international relations?

When foreign affairs are ruled by autocracies or oligarchies the danger of war is in sinister purpose.

When foreign affairs are ruled by democracies the danger of war will be in mistaken beliefs.

The world will be the gainer by the change, for, while there is no human way to prevent a king from having a bad heart, there is a human way to prevent a people from having an erroneous opinion.

That way is to furnish the whole people as a part of their ordinary education, with correct information about their relations to other peoples, about the limitations upon their own rights, about their duties to respect the rights of others, about what has happened and is happening in international affairs, and about the effects upon national life of the things that are done or refused as between nations;...

...so that the people themselves will have the means to test misinformation and appeals to prejudice and passion based upon error.

-Secretary of State Elihu Root, "Foreign Affairs", I, 5 (September 1922).